

# News Release



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **“Lincoln’s California Legacy” Showcased at Various Sacramento Museums**

*Exhibit Opening Dates Roll Out in April and May, 2009*

**SACRAMENTO, Calif.** – Two hundred years after the birth of President Abraham Lincoln, several State museums and historic parks in downtown Sacramento will showcase special exhibits that celebrate Lincoln’s far-reaching legacy in the Golden State. In fact, California State Parks in Sacramento are gearing up to showcase his lasting impact with a special “Lincoln’s California Legacy” focus that includes a series of exhibits coming soon to various Sacramento area museums. With opening dates that stagger from April through May, each of the special exhibits has a unique point of focus but all honor our nation’s revered sixteenth president and his lasting legacy in California.

Beginning on April 11 and kicking off the “Lincoln’s California Legacy” focus, the Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park will host an exhibit **“Walking the Grade: Contemporary Views of the Pacific Railroad”** that, by its very nature, underscores Lincoln’s broad-ranging vision for the future of American railroads. The western half of the Transcontinental Railroad will be the focus for this exhibit, which includes nearly two dozen black and white photographs by respected rail photographer Shen-Chih (Sam) Cheng plus artifacts highlighting Chinese rail workers. The compelling images highlight the original Central Pacific route as it looks today. The “Walking the Grade” exhibit will be located in the Mansion’s majestic ballroom and will continue until March 31, 2010.

On May 9-10, the California State Railroad Museum debuts **“The Rail Splitter and the Railroads: Lincoln, the Union and the Golden State.”** The exhibit—timed to also commemorate the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad—has been created especially for the California State Railroad Museum by Guest Curator Peter A. Hansen with support from the California State Railroad Museum Foundation. It demonstrates how Lincoln was instrumental in determining the role of American railroads in the transportation and early movement of crops and, eventually, even California gold. Additionally, the exhibit content includes interesting elements from Lincoln’s law career as it related to key issues concerning the railroad. “The Rail Splitter and the Railroads” will be showcased in the Museum’s Theater Mezzanine Gallery through February 15, 2010.

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On May 22, the California State Capitol Museum unveils a visually powerful exhibit **“Our Union Forever: California’s Role in the Civil War.”** This exhibit explores California's political, financial, and military support of Abraham Lincoln and the preservation of the Union. It also honors the extraordinary efforts of the thousands of California citizens who supported and sacrificed for the Union in a variety of ways. “Our Union Forever” will be on display in the Museum’s Attorney General Exhibit Room and will continue through May 23, 2010. Opening on the same date, visitors can also see a remarkable and unique collection of Civil War flags from the Capitol Historic Flag Collection on display in the Library Exhibit Room.

As outlined above, these three upcoming “Lincoln’s California Legacy” exhibits are being coordinated by California State Parks and the Capital District State Museums and Historic Parks. The special series of exhibits underscores the important role President Abraham Lincoln played in shaping the American railroad and thereby forever impacting the Golden State, a topic made especially interesting given that Lincoln never actually visited California.

More information about “Lincoln’s California Legacy” focus can be found at [www.parks.ca.gov/capitaldistrict](http://www.parks.ca.gov/capitaldistrict).

***About the Capital District State Museums and Historic Parks***

*The Capital District State Museums and Historic Parks encompasses seven State Historic Parks and Museums located within the Downtown and Midtown areas of California’s Capital City: California State Capitol Museum, California State Indian Museum, California State Railroad Museum, Governor’s Mansion State Historic Park, Leland Stanford Mansion State Historic Park, Old Sacramento State Historic Park and Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park. Additionally, two units are in outlying areas: the Woodland Opera House in Woodland, California; and Railtown 1897 State Historic Park located in Jamestown, in the heart of California’s Gold Country about 100 miles southeast of Sacramento. Collectively these facilities preserve and interpret the heritage of California’s Capital City, and illuminate the many forces that have shaped Sacramento and the Golden State.*

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**For Special Events at the Capital District State Museums and Historic Parks  
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